

District of Columbia Has Witnessed Prosperity in City Development During the Year 1920

NATIONAL CAPITAL LOOKS FORWARD TO AN EVENTFUL YEAR IN ALL ACTIVITIES

First Six Months, Carrying an Inauguration, Expected to Be Especially Busy Here.

After a year devoid of the excitement which marked the war period, the National Capital looks forward today to twelve months of big events.

With inauguration but a few months off and the possibility of a special session of the new Congress in the spring, it is certain that at least the first half of 1921 will find Washington a busy place.

Although there was a net reduction of 15,876 in the force of government employes in Washington during the past twelve months, Uncle Sam's personnel is still far in excess of what it was when the war expansion began. On January 1, 1920, there were 102,021 federal employes in the District. Today there are, in round numbers, 86,000.

One of the biggest municipal events of the year was the zoning of the city into height, area and use districts for building purposes. This enormous task was started in March by the newly created zoning commission and completed on September 1.

Under this law the height to which a building may be erected, the area of the lot which it may occupy and the use to which it may be put is definitely fixed for every street in the city.

There were two other municipal developments in 1920 which affect the pocketbooks of thousands. One is the increase in the tax rate on real estate and tangible personal property from \$1.50 to \$1.95 per \$100 of assessed value. The other is the increase in water rent from \$4.50 to \$5.65 for 56,000 gallons a year.

In addition to these increases, the rates of street car fare, gas, electricity and telephone service were advanced during the year on the showings made by the companies of increased operating costs.

Public Utilities Commission.

The commission had one of the most active years since its creation. It was called upon to fix street car fares twice, gas rates four times, electric current rates once and telephone rates once.

When it is recalled that the members of the Utilities Commission are also District Commissioners, handling the numerous questions devolving upon that board, it will be seen that a busy year 1920 was theirs.

From January until May the rate of carfare was four tokens for 25 cents, or 7 cents cash. From May 1 until January 1, 1921, the rate was 5 cents for 25 cents, or 8 cents cash. The street car problem was probably the most difficult that the commission has faced. It did not need the increases which the commission had to grant the Washington Railway and Electric Company.

For the first three months of the year the gas rate for households was 35 cents per thousand cubic feet. On April 1 the commission continued that rate for two months. From June 1 to August 31 the following schedule of gas rates was in effect: For 100,000 cubic feet or less a month, \$1.25; for 100,000 to 200,000, \$1.30; for 200,000 to 300,000, \$1.35; for 300,000 to 400,000, \$1.40; for 400,000 to 500,000, \$1.45; for 500,000 to 600,000, \$1.50; for 600,000 to 700,000, \$1.55; for 700,000 to 800,000, \$1.60; for 800,000 to 900,000, \$1.65; for 900,000 to 1,000,000, \$1.70; for 1,000,000 to 1,100,000, \$1.75; for 1,100,000 to 1,200,000, \$1.80; for 1,200,000 to 1,300,000, \$1.85; for 1,300,000 to 1,400,000, \$1.90; for 1,400,000 to 1,500,000, \$1.95; for 1,500,000 to 1,600,000, \$2.00; for 1,600,000 to 1,700,000, \$2.05; for 1,700,000 to 1,800,000, \$2.10; for 1,800,000 to 1,900,000, \$2.15; for 1,900,000 to 2,000,000, \$2.20; for 2,000,000 to 2,100,000, \$2.25; for 2,100,000 to 2,200,000, \$2.30; for 2,200,000 to 2,300,000, \$2.35; for 2,300,000 to 2,400,000, \$2.40; for 2,400,000 to 2,500,000, \$2.45; for 2,500,000 to 2,600,000, \$2.50; for 2,600,000 to 2,700,000, \$2.55; 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